

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A methyl ethyl hydroxyethyl cellulose ether, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the cellulose ether has a flocculation temperature of 70-95°C, a DS-methyl of 0.1-0.8 and a DS-ethyl of 0.1-0.7.

2. (currently amended) ~~The~~A cellulose ether ~~of according to claim 1, characterized in that it has~~ having a MS-hydroxyethyl of 1.5-2.8.

3. (currently amended) ~~The~~A cellulose ether ~~according to of claim 1, characterized in that it has~~ having a DS-methyl of 0.2-0.6, a DS-ethyl of 0.2-0.6 and a MS-hydroxyethyl of 1.7-2.5.

4. (currently amended) ~~The~~A cellulose ether ~~according to of claim 3, characterized in that it has~~ having a flocculation temperature of 78-85°C.

5. (currently amended) ~~The~~A cellulose ether ~~of claim 1 according to any one of claims 1-4, characterized in that it also contains~~ further comprising substituents selected from the group consisting of hydroxypropyl, ~~and~~ substituents containing hydrocarbon groups of 4-22 carbon atoms, or mixtures thereof.

6. (currently amended) A process for manufacturing the methyl ethyl hydroxyethyl cellulose ether according to ~~any one of claims 1-5, characterized in that claim 1~~ which comprises mercerizing cellulose is ~~mercerized in one or several steps with~~ aqueous alkali in a total amount of 0.8-1.8 moles of alkali per mole saccharide unit; and ethylene oxide in a total amount of 2.6-5.5 moles per mole saccharide unit, methyl chloride in a total amount of 0.2-1.5 moles per mole saccharide unit and ethyl chloride in a total amount of 0.2-1.5 moles per mole saccharide unit are added to and reacted with the mercerized cellulose in one or several steps in the presence of an organic reaction medium at a temperature from 50-120°C.

7. (currently amended) ~~The~~A process according to of claim 6, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the reaction medium is ethyl chloride.

8. (currently amended) ~~The~~A process according to of claim 6 ~~or 7, characterized in that wherein~~ the cellulose is initially mercerized with a portion of the total amount of alkali; a portion of the total amount of ethylene oxide, a portion of or the total amount of methyl chloride and a portion of or the total amount of ethyl chloride, if ethyl chloride is not present as a reaction medium, are added to and reacted with the initially mercerized cellulose in one or several steps at a temperature from 50-120°C, whereupon the partially substituted mercerized cellulose is further mercerized with the remaining portion of the alkali; and the remaining portion of the ethylene oxide and any remaining portion of methyl chloride and any remaining portion of ethyl chloride, if ethyl chloride is not present as a reaction medium, are added to and reacted with the further mercerized cellulose in one or several steps at a temperature from 50-120°C.

9. (currently amended) An aqueous formulation containing 0.1-2.5% by weight of the cellulose ether ~~defined in any one of the claims 1-5 of~~ claim 1.

10. (currently amended) ~~The~~An aqueous formulation according to of claim 9, ~~wherein characterized in that~~ the formulation is a waterborne paint composition containing a latex binder.

11. (currently amended) A rheology modifier for aqueous compositions which comprises at least one Use of a methyl ethyl hydroxyethyl cellulose defined in claims 1-5 as a thickener or rheology modifier in a water phase of claim 1.

12. (new) The modifier of claim 11 wherein said aqueous composition is a waterborne latex paint composition.